

July 23, 2020

Re: Support Funding for Lead Service Line Replacement

Dear Representative,

We write on behalf of our millions of members and activists, and as many as 22 million people across the country who get their water from “lead service lines” that provide drinking water to their homes.¹ These pipes can cause lead in tap water, a known risk to people’s health especially to children under 6, but also posing threats to adults.

We urge you to support the Tlaib/Kildee/Slotkin amendment to the Interior and Environment Appropriations legislation, scheduled to be considered on the House floor (Amendment #71 in En Bloc #2). This amendment would increase the appropriation for lead service line replacement to a total of \$1 billion, a \$500 million dollar increase from the committee-reported bill - a timely investment in removing the 6 to 10 million lead service lines that contaminate our tap water.² You will recall that on July 1 the House authorized \$4.5 billion in funding for lead service line replacement through a previous Tlaib/Kildee/Slotkin/Cicilline/Moore floor amendment to H.R. 2 (the Move Forward Act) that received bipartisan support and a strong vote of 240-181.

The American Academy of Pediatrics has said lead-contaminated water can harm the developing brains of children.³ Lead disproportionately hurts children in low-income communities and Black and other communities of color.⁴

While most of us know about the lead contamination in the tap water of Flint, Michigan, few people realize that lead-contaminated drinking water is a nationwide problem, affecting every state.⁵ Action is long overdue, and we urge the House of Representatives to support the Tlaib/Kildee lead service line funding amendment.

The Amendment would prioritize funding for low-income “disadvantaged communities” (as defined in the Safe Drinking Water Act). It also would require that lead service lines must be fully replaced to receive funding. This is important because partially removing a lead line and leaving the rest still in use can make the lead contamination worse, according to EPA’s Science Advisory Board and other experts.⁶

The Amendment would take a major step towards addressing what has been called “a long-running environmental catastrophe.”⁷ We urge the full House—and after that the U.S. Senate—to

¹ See <https://awwa.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.5942/jawwa.2016.108.0086>

² https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2016-10/documents/508_lcr_revisions_white_paper_final_10.26.16.pdf

³ See <https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/pediatrics/early/2016/06/16/peds.2016-1493.full.pdf>

⁴ See <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5623116/>

⁵ [What’s in Your Water? An Updated Analysis](https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-09/documents/sab_evaluation_partial_lead_service_lines_epa-sab-11-015.pdf)

⁶ https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-09/documents/sab_evaluation_partial_lead_service_lines_epa-sab-11-015.pdf[7]

⁷ <https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/great-lead-water-pipe-disaster>

adopt this measure to finally launch a nationwide program to replace all lead service lines. We urge you to support this critical infrastructure investment now.

Sincerely,

ACE (Alternatives for Community and Environment, Roxbury MA)

Alliance for the Great Lakes

American Public Health Association

American Rivers

Black Millennials 4 Flint

Bush Lake Chapter of the Izaak Walton League

Cahaba River Society

Childhood Lead Action Project

Children's Environmental Health Network

City of Boston

Clean Water Action

Conservation Alabama

Conservation Colorado

Conservation Minnesota

Earthjustice

Earthworks

Ecology Center

Endangered Species Coalition

Environment Council of Rhode Island

Environment America

Environment California

Environment Florida

Environment Georgia

Environment Iowa

Environment Illinois

Environment Maine

Environment Maryland

Environment Michigan

Environment Minnesota

Environment Montana

Environment New Mexico

Environment New Jersey

Environment New Hampshire

Environment Rhode Island

Environmental Defense Fund

Environmental Law & Policy Center

Food & Water Action

For Love of Water (FLOW)

Freshwater Future

Friends of the Mississippi River

Great Rivers Environmental Law Center

Green Latinos

Griffith Izaak Walton League of America
Grounded Strategies
Harpeth Conservancy
Healing Our Waters-Great Lakes Coalition
Healthy Homes Coalition of West Michigan
Hoosier Environmental Council
Illinois Environmental Council
Illinois PIRG
League of Conservation Voters
Liveable Arlington
Maryland PIRG
MASS PIRG
Milwaukee Riverkeeper
Milwaukee Water Commons
Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy
Minnesota Well Owners Organization MNWOO
MN Division - Izaak Walton League
MLPB (a fiscally sponsored program of TSNE | MissionWorks)
National Consumer Law Center, on behalf of its low-income clients
National Parks Conservation Association
Natural Resources Defense Council
Nevada Conservation League
New Jersey Future
New Jersey PIRG
New York League of Conservation Voters
North Carolina League of Conservation Voters
Ohio Environmental Council Action Fund
Ohio Healthy Homes Network
One PA
Penn Environment
PENN PIRG
Pennsylvania Council of Churches
Public Citizen
Religious Coalition for the Great Lakes
RI Interfaith Power and Light
River Alliance of Wisconsin
River Network
Save the Dunes
Sierra Club
Southern Environmental Law Center
Texas Campaign for the Environment
Texas PIRG
The George Wiley Center
U.S. PIRG
Waterkeeper Alliance
WE ACT for Environmental Justice
West Bay Land Trust